

No.  
34.

"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS  
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE  
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

II T I M O T H Y, 2.

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and  
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N U M B E R S 16.  
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*An Address (revised) at*

St. Mary Axe, E.C.

14th November, 1913.

by

PERCY W. HEWARD.

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Scriptural literature for Believers  
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II TIMOTHY 2, and NUMBERS 16.  
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An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,

At St. Mary Axe. E.

14th November, 1913.

II Timothy 2 is deeply important. Indeed so is all Scripture. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable". The passage begins thus - "Thou, therefore, child of mine, be empowered in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and the things that thou didst hear from my side through many witnesses, these entrust at once to faithful men who are of such a kind that they shall be sufficient even to have taught others of another kind. Thou therefore suffer evil at once, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth is being entangled in the affairs of this life, that he may have pleased Him Who chose him to be a warrior".

We can at once see from these opening words that the passage is deeply practical, deeply heart-searching, and suggestive of a strenuous and painful life. Thus in verse 5 we read of striving, in verse 6 of labouring, in verse 9 of suffering evil, in verse 10 of remaining under, and then come those deeply solemn words - "For if together we die, also together we shall live, if we remain under, also together we shall reign, if we shall deny, THAT ONE also will deny us, if we are unbelieving, That One remaineth believable; to have denied Himself, He hath not power".

Oh, how heart-searching is that message to the Lord's dear people. "If we died with Him" concerns all in Christ. "If we remain under, we shall reign" gives a limitation, and the other two "ifs" suggest a loss - "That One will deny us", "If we are unfaithful, He remains faithful", and therefore will not excuse our unfaithfulness, but will chasten us now, and hold us back from reward "in that Day". The apostle adds, "As to these things put them in mind, bearing witness in the sight of the Lord, not to be striving with words to no profit, to the catastrophe (subverting) of those that hear". The expression "to no profit" brings before us the striking words of a later verse. "If anyone shall have purged himself away from these, he shall be a vessel with a view to honour, having been set apart and WELL-profitable, - well - profitable to the Sovereign Lord with a view to every good work having been made ready".

I have just read those verses, beloved friends, because I think it is right and Scripturally beneficial for us to have something from God's Own inspired Words very definitely in front of us, and in our minds and memories at the outset of our searching. We have come from various occupations, we have come with our minds somewhat blunted, it may be, by the strain of the day. Other things have sought to maintain their position, add to drive out the things which should be first. The communion of the Lord, though realised in some measure, is ever before the Lord's redeemed

as something they wish to realise more, and it may be, and I think it will be, that a little meditation on His Own precious Words, with hardly any comments in between, will at the beginning of our gathering together fill us, in the Holy Spirit's working, with gratitude, and desire to know more of the Truth.

Scripture allusions are striking as well as Scripture quotations. I recollect coming across the suggestion that where the Lord speaks of two sparrows sold for a farthing, He may have been referring to the two birds that come before us in the law, (of Lev. 14 etc) That where we are told, John in baptizing said, God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham, he may have thought, while standing on Jordan's brink of the stones brought up when Israel passed over. Such allusions are underneath the surface, but they are deeply precious. I well recollect how helpful I felt it when I discovered that in Hebrews 10 the words "yet a little while, how greatly little, how greatly little!" were taken from Isaiah 26, and also when I found that the words of Matthew 11 - "Come unto Me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls" - that these words were largely taken from Leviticus 16 and the teaching of the Day of Atonement! Of necessity with an implied contrast. Then Israel were told

to afflict their souls. Here was a striking contrast which the Lord promised, yet He adopted many of the words of Leviticus 16. The English translation hardly brings this out, but it is definitely marked if we go back to the words of the oldest translation, the Hebrew into the Greek, which is preserved in the Septuagint. I am persuaded that there are hundreds of allusions in the later Scriptures which we have not yet discovered, and that all those Scripture allusions will help us to understand the whole of God's Word the better. It is, therefore, not with any apology for the subject that I ask you to connect II Timothy 2 and Numbers 16. I am convinced that the chapter in front of us, in Paul's last epistle refers to that solemn passage in the Book of Moses, but before we consider it, shall we notice the awful state of Korah, Dathan and Abiram?

You know the story, the sad history. We find that in the tribes of Levi and Reuben dissatisfaction was found. Korah was the son of Izhar, (Izhar was the next to Amram in Kohath's family, and therefore Korah was cousin to Moses and Aaron), - Korah, with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of REUBEN (the eldest son of Jacob) took men. Now the sons of Reuben wanted the firstborn's position, they desired to be exalted, they desired to be honoured, they desired as it were the kingdom. Korah wished the priest's position

Thus the two were together, against the will of God. Here is an attempt to make a priest-kingship against God. All through Scripture we find man's attempt is to make his own king-priest. God gave a beautiful type of the Lord Jesus Christ in Melchisedec the king-priest, but apart from this He oft separates the two positions. I know that Moses' # FALTERING was that which was overruled to separate his ruling from Aaron's priesthood, but it WAS overruled. Then we find in the history of Israel that a David has a Zadok with him, but David is not Zadok. We find that a Jehoiada is with a Joash, and that a Josiah has a Hilkiah, but, throughout, we discover a separation between the king and the priest. On the return from captivity, it is the same. Zerubbabel "represents" the kingly tribe. Joshua, the son of Josedech<sup>is</sup> the priest. You will recollect how that on several occasions there was an attempt to make a king-priest. Jeroboam was a king who offered incense. Uzziah vainly tried so to do. Remarkably the kings of PERGAMUM, of which city Revelation 2 says "where SATAN'S throne is" were king-priests, as Nimrod and the Babylonian kings were king-priests, and afterwards, in christendom, the Papal Authority tried to combine these two functions, but only in Christ are they rightly united. Here in Numbers 16 was an attempt to make a king-priest-ship in unholy fellowship against the mind of the Lord. You recollect how the insurrection spread, and it assumed the language of godliness, - "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy every one of them, and

the Lord is among them". Here we have brought before us wicked hearts expressing themselves in pious language, and then you know how that Dathan and Abiram were still more rebellious, for when Moses sent to them they said, "We will not come up", they asked as it were, "Do you mean to make yourself a prince over us?" This statement showed what their own longing was. You can usually tell the condition of a man's heart by how he charges others, at least when that man is engaged in "violent" controversy. You can tell something of himself from what he objects against yourself. THESE desired to be princes, and then they offered the cruel insult to Moses, "Wilt thou bore out the eyes of these men?" (Margin of verse 14). And Moses' gentle answer, though amid holy indignation, is very beautiful. He next deals with Korah, and we are told that the Lord suggests slaying the whole congregation, and Moses and Aaron fall on their faces and beseech God to still manifest His mercy, "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation?" Ah, it is a beautiful attitude against self-exalting that Moses takes here. More than once God spake of destroying the nation, and on one occasion said to Moses, "I will make of thee a greater nation". Thus God's promise would have stood, but Moses did not desire honour for himself. There was no selfishness tolerated in Moses' character, and I have always felt that this stands out the more remarkably if we realise that when the Lord said "I will smite them and make of thee a greater inheritance", this

is put in the Scripture a little way before the record of Moses smiting the rock, and losing Canaan through it. If he had said, "Yea, let them be smitten", we might almost conceive he would never have reached that difficult tangle, but he was brought into that difficulty in connection with his very earnest longing, - yet God would not excuse his sin on that account. Oh how righteous, as well as gracious our God is!

You know the sad story in Numbers 16, Korah is Divinely judged, and those with him are judged with fire, just as there was fire on Nadab and Abihu. Dathan and Abiram are dealt with by the earth opening and swallowing them up. The Lord creates a new thing, and they go down alive into the unseen world. You recollect how that afterwards the people complained, and said to Moses and Aaron, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord", and the Lord was angry at this, but, in answer to the prayer, or type of prayer, of Aaron, picturing the prayer of the Lord Jesus, the Great High Priest, - in answer to this, grace reigned, and though 14,700 died, yet when the high priest, against whom men had spoken, stood between the dead and the living, with the incense that reminded of a sacrifice, the plague was stayed. It is beautiful to notice the graciousness of God's people here. It is solemn to see that awful condition of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; yet, where sin abounded, grace abounded. We are told at the beginning that On the son of Peleth was there. We are not told of him afterwards. The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company

of Abiram, but where was On, the son of Peleth? Did grace draw him back? Again we read elsewhere, "The children of Korah died not", and in the Psalms you have "Psalms for the sons of Korah". Where grace spares, praise reigns. Oh, that we might enter into the fulness of grace. The subject is solemn, but it is tinged, aye, more than tinged with the wondrous love of our glorious God.

There are many present parallels with these awful sins. You will notice the words "All the congregation are holy, even everyone of them, and the Lord is among them, wherefore lift ye up yourselves among the congregation of the Lord?" Beloved friends, I am persuaded that the socialism of the present century finds its reflection among God's dear people, and that they oft-times use words which are Divinely appropriate to introduce that which is most serious and sinful. True all the redeemed are holy, but there are diversities of responsibilities among the Lord's people. There is an equality as to salvation, but there is not an equality as to service. The sin that is here before us is still found in the rejection of all discipline and the exaltation of self, under cover of the universality of nearness to the Lord on the part of His people. We may be (if we have been born again we are) holy in Christ Jesus, but this does not mean that we can all carry out the same parts of service. There are "diversities", - as in the early church there were diversities of gifts, diversities of administrations God arranged, for He was and is Sovereign. We cannot dictate

to Him. Human levelling is a serious crime. Again the sin of Korah is marked out in the striking words of Moses, - he not only says "The Lord will show who is Holy", not only "YE take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi", but "The God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to Himself, to do the service of the Tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto Him, and He hath brought thee near to Him, and all thy brethren, the sons of Levi with thee, AND SEEK YE THE PREISTHOOD ALSO for which cause thou, and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord". It has been sometimes remarked that those who deny human claims of priestly succession are committing the sin of Korah. But, beloved friends, it is all the other way round. Every man who makes himself a priest is committing the sin of Korah, and if in verse 3 we have the thought of present-day socialism, these added words show us that we have the thought of present-day priestliness, and if we look along the history of christendom, do we not find that these two things have been Satan's attempt against all discipline? We find in Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, Divine lessons in this matter. There we have the hint of the beginning of priestcraft. It is remarkable that the word Nicolaitanes may either mean "ruling the people" (in priestly authority) or "The people ruling" (in socialistic democracy). The two sins are therefore wrapped up in the sins of the Nicolaitanes, and as to these the Lord says, "Which thing I

hate". Ah, all sin has the same tendency, and all sin has the same goal, but, blessed be God, that the sins of His people met their goal when the Lord made to meet on Him the iniquity of us all, that we having become away from sin, should live to the praise of the glory of His grace.

But now I want to show, - which is the underlying thought in this address, - that these two passages are related. For if we once grasp the relationship of the passage, the MEANING of 2 Timothy 2 will be much clearer. First of all, turning back to 2 Timothy 2, will you notice the words, "The Lord knoweth them that are His". In Numbers 16, "Even tomorrow the Lord will show who are His, and who is holy". In the Greek we have the word "The Lord knew (or "Jehovah knew") those who are His". Further, just before this, we read "Their word will eat as doth a canker, of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus", (belonging to whom). Thus we have a company belonging to certain men, not belonging to the Lord, - "of whom". In Numbers 16. 5 we read "Korah and all HIS company". In verse 33 it is remarkable that we have "They and all that appertained to them", and in verse 32 "All the men that appertained to Korah", and in one of those verses we have practically the same words as where we read, "The Lord knew those that ARE His", - "Those that are with Korah". An awful contrast with "THOSE THAT ARE HIS". So we have Korah and his company and God, and His company. Likewise Hymenaeus and Philetus with their company on the one hand in Timothy, and on the

other hand "The Lord knoweth (or as it is more literally "knew") them that are His". Then it adds, "And let everyone that nameth the Name of Christ (or, preferably, the Name of the Lord) depart from iniquity". Surely that has an allusion to departing from those wicked men. But the most striking evidence to me is the repetition of words from the root "to stand". In 2 Timothy 2 we have word after word from this root. It is one of the most precious Bible readings on a word that I know in the whole of Scripture. In the 16th verse "But profane and vain babblings shun". The word "shun" is "make to STAND around". Do not have them STANDING in your midst, put them outside the door. Verse 18 - "Saying that the resurrection". The word "resurrection" is the word "STANDING again". Verse 19 Nevertheless the solid foundation of God hath STOOD". "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, (not depart merely, but) STAND AWAY from unrighteousness". Then before this we have a word from the same root that also occurs in Numbers 16. "Study to show thyself approved unto God" is literally "Be zealous to have made thyself to STAND before God". Here is a precious prospect. Now is this accidental? It cannot be. Is it forced? By no means. Is it intended? Undoubtedly. If there is any doubt surely the 19th verse will settle this. "The foundation of God STANDETH sure". "Let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord STAND AWAY from lawlessness". For anyone to say the stress was not intended would be utter care-

lessness of the words of the Holy Spirit. Now, do we find the same stress on the word "stand" in Numbers 16? We do, we find compounds of it, I believe eleven times in the chapter. The verses are as follows:- 2, 3, (twice), 9, (You might just look at 9, The Lord had chosen them to STAND before the congregation to minister to Him. This is the very word to STAND BESIDE that Paul uses in 2 Timothy 2. 15 where he says, Be ambitious, be earnest to have made thyself to STAND BESIDE God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth). The other verses are 18, 19, 25, 27 (twice over), 40, and 48. Note also Numbers 26. 9.LXX. Then it seems fairly plain that the Holy Spirit in 2 Timothy 2 is referring back to Numbers 16. Again in verse 2 we are told that they were "men of renown", "men of the name". Is this accidental? "Let every one that nameth the NAME of the Lord (not his own name) STAND away from lawlessness". There is not any doubt in my mind beloved friends, that Numbers 16 is in Paul's mind in 2 Timothy 2, and doubtless it was frequently in his mind. The evidence seems clear. The verb used in "If anyone shall PURGE himself away from these" comes only once more in the New Testament, namely in 1 Corinthians 5, where we read, "Purge out the old leaven". We turn thither to see if it alludes to the Old Testament. In that passage we have the casting out of the midst, and "out of the midst", is the very word used in Numbers 16 for separation, more than once, (note also the term for having been gathered in 1 Corinthians

5. 4.) Further in 2 Corinthians 6 the apostle is speaking pointedly of separation. Undoubtedly here he alludes to Numbers 16 for he says "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing". "Touch not" is in Numbers 16. 26. And the apostle adds "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved let us cleanse ourselves". A similar word, though not the same, as the cleansing in 2 Timothy 2. And when he says "Receive us" in 2 Corinthians 7. 2, he uses another word from Numbers 16. The word is "to make a place". In Numbers 16 it says, "Make a place out from the midst of them", just as Paul in 2 Corinthians 6. 17 this same context says, "Come out from the MIDST of them", Then he at once adds (the chapter break hinders us from seeing it) "make a place for us", come at once out from the midst of them, have no fellowship of the world, make a place for us. This shows us that in 1 Corinthians 5, in 2 Corinthians 6, and in 2 Timothy 2, the apostle is thinking of Numbers 16. But those passages are some of the most prominent passages on separation. Then it is plain that Numbers 16 was one of the special Scriptures in the mind of God's servants in the early church, as to separation. It therefore, becomes probable that if we by grace understand this position we shall know more of His mind and His will for us regarding separation. But undoubtedly another Scripture also is in mind. Isaiah 52, "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence". Now the word "depart" is "stand away" "stand away" which is quoted in

2 Timothy 2. The word "go out" is the word that is used in 2 Corinthians 6, and "touch not" an unclean thing" also is there. "Go ye out of the midst of her, be ye purged, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord". "Vessels" are before us in 2 Timothy 2. I take it that this passage shows again how the verses of 2 Timothy Corinthians 6 are linked, and that what God has joined together, we must not separate. Further the apostle alludes to at least two more passages in the law. In Leviticus 11. 32, we have a reference to unclean animals, and it says, where they fall, anything will be unclean, whether a vessel of WOOD, or raiment, or whatever it be, and every EARTHEN vessel shall be unclean. Vessels of wood and earth, and uncleanness. So 2 Timothy 2 refers to Leviticus 11. Again, in Leviticus 15 we have one who is unclean, and the passage says, Whomsoever he TOUCHETH, mark this, - he shall wash his clothes and be unclean, and the vessel of earth that he toucheth, etc. verse 12. Plainly there is an allusion to this. You see, beloved friends, all these subjects are expounding to us that Scripture is not simply a book of which we can take one chapter and enjoy that, - though we should take each chapter and thus enjoy it, - but we need also to take the whole and all these Mosaic legal arrangements are not out of date. They have a spiritual parallel. If the Lord gives oxen something to eat, it is written to teach US something, says 1 Corinthians 9, and if the Lord arranges something as to uncleanness or unclean

animals, there is a spiritual lesson for us in it, and we need to have our eyes opened, and our hearts attentive, and our minds responsive. Feeling I shall not be wearying you, may I add one of two other Scriptures, because I take it that you want to have something to ponder afterwards, with the Scriptures in your mind. We can never go fully into a subject here. We want rather to help one another to go forward in the WHOLE of our life, of which this is only a fraction. In Joshua 17. <sup>14</sup>~~25~~, Joshua encourages Ephraim with precious and solemn words. Ephraim desired more land, Joshua said that they should go to the wood country and cut down for themselves there, in the land of the Perizzites and the giants. The word CUT DOWN for thyself is explained in the Greek, translating from the Hebrew, as PURGE OUT for thyself. This very unusual word "to purge out", which only occurs twice in the later Scriptures, occurs here. To purge out FOR thyself. O, some one may say, what has such a verse to do with our theme? A great deal. "To purge thyself out" is a solemn contrast. It is not aggressive. It is withdrawing. "Purge out for thyself" is aggressive. 1 Corinthians 5 is aggressive "Purge out the old leaven, cleanse the assembly". 2 Timothy 2 is "Purge thyself out; thou canst not cleanse all the companies that profess Christ's Name, thou canst not put christendom right, purge thyself out". Again, God said to Gideon, in the book of Judges, that he was to bring his associates down to the water, and then there would be the testing, "I will try them for thee there". Literally in the

Septuagint, "I will <sup>purge</sup> ~~try~~ them out for thee there", the same word. In every case then, there is the thought of separation, and I beg you to notice that the separation is usually linked with PERSONS, and not only with things. Let us fix that in our mind. Of course, beloved friends, we are to be separated from sins, but this involves a separation from persons as well. We must acknowledge that 1 Corinthians<sup>5</sup> is separation from persons, that 2 Corinthians<sup>6</sup> is separation from persons, and so in 2 Timothy 2. The Lord calls His Own dear blood-bought people to a certain necessary separation from PERSONS, when persons cling to evil. Now I think, by grace, we may have something of the key to the passage. Just to paraphrase, and seek by grace to apply, from the 19th verse. On the one hand the solid foundation of God has taken its stand. We have not yet a completed house, but there is the foundation, and that foundation has a seal. The Lord recognised in the past those who are His in the present. But though His past work has secured their present salvation, how can WE tell those who are His? The Lord knows, and the Lord will show, but it is our responsibility to stand away from unrighteousness, if we name, not our name, but His Name. This is on the one hand, and this is the present, but on the other hand when we get beyond the foundation, when we shall be in the great house of the kingdom, there shall be a completeness, then in that great house built on the foundation, there will not be only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earthen~~ware~~ ware. The present tense

states an ever-applicable fact, and also hints present preparation for "that Day". But this great house cannot be christendom, because the greatness of christendom is sinful, but the greatness of the house here causes it to have the golden vessels. In a tiny house there are not golden vessels. In the GREAT house there will be these vessels, and the word used for vessels is the word used for whatsoever belongs to a house. It is rendered "stuff" - in Luke 17; and in Matthew 12 we read about spoiling a man's goods, his vessels. The ordinary vessels of the house are brought before us here. Now in a small house they are naturally of wood and earth. In Leviticus we have just seen God speaks about Israel coming through the wilderness, and then in the land having wooden and earthen vessels in their house, which would be damaged by contact with evil. Scripture does not put gold and silver specially in prominence there, because they would not be a nation of such great wealth, that all would have palaces, albeit God would provide their needs and give them plenty of things. As they were not all to have palaces, the wooden and earthen vessels, we have seen in Leviticus, were the ordinary vessels of the household. The gold and silver are not the ordinary, but the palace vessels. They were in God's temple, and in king's palaces. So we have a GREAT house brought before us here, - the future millennial Kingdom, with a "good" greatness. But in that house there are vessels of gold and silver, and also wood and earth, and some with a view

to honour and some to dishonour, they are IN the house, but with a view to dishonour. In Matthew 5, we read, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven". But the adjoining verse says that if anyone breaks one of the least commandments he shall be called least IN the kingdom of heaven. He will be there, but called least. In like manner Romans 9 says that there are those who are vessels to dishonour (or vessels of wrath), outside the kingdom, there is also another dishonour INSIDE the house. Dishonour outside the house is eternal judgment. Dishonour inside the house is loss of millennial reward. The words "with a view to honour" occur in the Septuagint of Exodus 28. 2, where we read of Aaron's beautiful garments with a view to honour. Now, beloved friends, we can understand the thought here. "If anyone shall have purged himself away from these", away from these things and these persons, as chapter 3. 5 plainly illustrates; for it says, "And as to these, these persons, turn away, for out from these, these persons, are those who creep into the houses", etc. If you are looking forward for the great house, purge yourself from these. There must be a contrast. If anyone shall have purged himself OUT, that is purging himself internally; and also AWAY from these, that is externally, he shall be a vessel to honour. Here is the right order. He purges himself first, then "away from these" next. Separation without personal purity is a miserable confusion. If anyone shall have purged himself

thoroughly first, away from these, secondly. Standing aloof from others, with a low state of godliness is mere Pharisaism, but if we are those who by grace search our hearts, then we can stand aloof, secondly, but not with pride, rather with sorrow; not with delight in separation, nay with concern for those from whom we must be separate, in the exalting of the Holy Spirit. Not exalting ourselves, but bowed down to think of the ruin that has been brought in. That if anyone shall thus purge himself away from these, he shall be (mark the future). The Lord knew in the past those who are His in the present, who shall be thus in the future. Here are the tenses of the Divine arrangement. He SHALL BE a vessel with a view to honour in the kingdom. The words "vessel" and "honour" occur together at least four times in Scripture. Romans 9. 21 is deeply suggestive. Every one should know how to possess his vessel unto honour, 1 Thess. 4. In 1 Peter 3 - the believing husband is told to give honour to the wife as to the weaker vessel, that prayers may not be hindered. A vessel unto honour is here brought before us <sup>as</sup> ~~is~~ a believer who is holy in life in the present time, and will be a vessel unto honour in that day. The vessel is frequently a name of the body. I think that is the meaning of 1 Thess. 4. Possessing one's own vessel in honour. Colossians 2 gives us a contrast, where it says that certain ones were apparently mortifying the body, not in any honour, but only to the filling up of the flesh. Again we read about "dishonouring" in Romans 1, in the same context of the unsaved, but as to 2 Timothy 2 sadly contrasted

context; and in 1 Corinthians 6 holiness is particularly emphasized in connection with the body. "Glorify God in your body", includes the thought, and 2 Corinthians 6 which we have seen is parallel to 2 Timothy 2, goes on to say "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God". Of Paul we are told, "He is a chosen vessel to Me", though in his estimate of himself, he said, "we have this treasure in earthen vessels". A vessel of election, a vessel of mercy, before God. An earthen vessel in his own esteem, but the body was the vessel to bear "My Name", says the Lord. So that the honour of a vessel is to be used. Gold and silver vessels were brought out by kings (see Daniel 5) and the gold and silver vessels<sup>ly</sup> spiritually will be nearest to the King in the kingdom. If anyone shall purge himself away from these in the present time, he shall be in that future time a vessel unto honour, sanctified, having been set apart, having been made holy - here is the same root as "The Lord will show who are holy", - and useful to the Master. The word "useful" implies "well meeting the need of" the Master. O, how condescending is our God, so to speak of His people. If we are faithful to Him now, we shall be made READY with a view to every good work, in that Day. For those who are faithful now are training for the kingdom, - not for salvation, that is a fact first, but if there is a holy separation, there shall be a reward when the Lord comes back. Oh that we might live in the light of this, and that we might not only stand

away from unrighteousness, but purge ourselves away from <sup>friendship</sup> ~~with~~ those persons who are living in a way that suggests they will be vessels unto dishonour. We can only have true fellowship with those who wish to please the Lord, and so the passage continues, - "But the newer desired flee, but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace WITH them that call upon the Lord". We have already seen those WITH Korah. Here are those whom believers are rightly "WITH", - each being marked by calling on the Lord out of a PURE heart. In Numbers, the 16th chapter is followed by the 17th and 18th. In the 17th chapter God marks out the rod that speaks of resurrection, and in the 18th the Levites are specially GIVEN to Aaron, that they may be assistants to him, but it says concerning Aaron, they are given to thee WITH thy sons, in reference to the VESSELS of the house of the Lord. So we have Aaron WITH his sons attending to the Lord's vessels. Fellowship comes in after. So is it here. Separation first. That is Numbers 16. Fellowship in the Tabernacle, ah, in the great house, the counterpart of the tabernacle, that is Numbers 18. If Isaiah 52 says "Be ye clean ye that BEAR the vessels of the Lord", here we see a step beyond bearing vessels in the present dispensation, BEING vessels, for the present dispensation is an anticipation of the future. If we are chosen vessels now, bearing the Lord's Name, we may be sure He will not put us in the background when we are with Him in the Kingdom. O that in the power of the Holy Spirit we may live anticipating His Return, and that the

words may be very precious to our hearts "meet for the Master's use".

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Q. The term "vessels of mercy prepared aforetime", does that refer to the body, or to the whole being?

A. The whole being, I suppose, but there is a special thought in the word often translated "vessel". It is that in which something would be put, and God has put in us a new life, but where a person is said to possess a vessel, (let everyone possess his vessel). I presume there is a great stress as to the body in that. He, himself, the individual, possesses a vessel and he is to think more of that vessel than of looking after the household stuff that a man calls his vessels.

Q. You said that the rod speaks of resurrection, and gave no reason for that?

A. It was a stick like the others, but when beheld afterwards, it budded and had almonds and blossoms.

Q. Yes, thank you.

A. It is not till that rod has budded that we have the special stress on the fellowship of Aaron and his sons. The error in II Timothy was that they said resurrection was passed already, but Numbers 16 must come first - separation. Numbers 17 - resurrection. Numbers 18 - fellowship in the kingdom. It seems to me impossible to separate the passages. I knew the passages were deeply interesting, but I little realised what a feast of enjoyment I was to have in preparation for this evening among you.

Q. Speaking of present-day socialism, or thoughts on socialism, - as to service, do you not think true socialism is the millennial kingdom that Christ will set up on earth, with Christ the Head, and all of His brethren?

A. What is socialism? If you will define it, I will answer.

Q. The lion shall lie down with the lamb, there will be a oneness, there will be an equality.

A. Would you mind explaining socialism, dear Mr. -- the word has so many meanings. True socialism is undoubtedly a contrast with the way in which the word socialism is commonly employed, because socialism implies a society, and a society implies differences. Our human body has a real socialism about it, but all our limbs do not perform the same functions. If it were all hearing, where were the smelling, if it were all smelling, where were the seeing? The Holy Spirit refers to this.

Q. Referring to the churches of Revelation; is Laodicea from λαος and δικη - rights of the people?

A. It either comes from "people, righteous", or "people, justice". Self-righteous people exercise their own judgment, so the two things come together.

Q. Did you deal with the strange fire?

A. No, that is very solemn.

Q. What would you say as to II Timothy 2. 16 concerning the strange fire?

A. I suppose that those who came to God their own

way would suggest those who in II Timothy were religious. They had turned away from Paul, but they were still "religious," and still talked about the things of God, (as you rightly say) in verse 16. There was the prevalence in those days of empty phrases. THEIR WORDS will eat as doth a canker, and we know that the whole congregation were ruined awhile by the sin of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Their word will eat as doth a canker, and the apostle adds in verse 25 "In meekness disciplin<sup>ing</sup> those that oppose themselves". Those of old opposed themselves to Moses, but Moses answered so meekly. "Peradventure God may give them repentance". Beloved friends, I am sure of this, that if we go to those that oppose themselves and try to patch up a difference, we are unkind to ourselves, and to them, and dishonouring our Lord; but that if we seek to realise the difference before God, that God will often give the one who is in error repentance, and there will be a unity in the Truth. We do not count on God enough. We are afraid of offending others, and afraid of being thought pharisaic, but it is most sinful to identify ourselves with that which is not the mind of the Lord, for the fear of being CALLED pharisaic. In the law if any man touched what was wrong, he himself was unclean, and treated in measure like that which he touched. I know people say you cannot separate from every sin. You have to separate from yourself. That misses a deeply important point. We are to separate from every known sin. It is assumed that if we are led of the Spirit, if we see evil in ourselves, we are to put it away. It is a very difficult path. The Lord give grace.

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